

Rochester Institute of Technology

RIT Scholar Works

Theses

4-1-1997

not me

Michele Petrulis

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.rit.edu/theses>

Recommended Citation

Petrulis, Michele, "not me" (1997). Thesis. Rochester Institute of Technology. Accessed from

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by RIT Scholar Works. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses by an authorized administrator of RIT Scholar Works. For more information, please contact ritscholarworks@rit.edu.

not me

Graduate Thesis
Master of Fine Arts
School of Photographic Arts and Sciences
Rochester Institute of Technology

by Michele Anne Petrulis

April 1997

Thesis Board Members;

Patti Ambrogi, Thesis Chair, Associate Professor, SPAS

----- 5.21.97
date

Elliott Rubenstein, Professor, SPAS

----- 5.21.97
date

Cat Ashworth, Visiting Associate Professor, SPAS

----- 5-21-97
date

not me

I, Michele Anne Petrulis, hereby grant permission to Wallace Memorial Library of the Rochester Institute of Technology to reproduce my Thesis in whole or in part. Any reproduction will not be for commercial use or profit.

Signature of Author: _____

Date: _____

not me

Description of the Work (and slides)

Description of the installation and individual pieces

The MFA Work

The Evolution of Works

*(Physical Descriptions and Relevance to My Present
Thesis Will Be Addressed in this Section)*

Fall 1993 (and Brad)
Winter 1993-4
Spring 1994
Summer 1994 (Dad and O.J.)
Fall 1994
Winter 1994-5
Spring 1995
Fall 1995 - Spring 1996
Fall 1996 Spring 1997

Influences

Artistic influences
Personal influences

Conclusion

Bibliography

"You must do the thing you think you cannot do."

-Eleanor Roosevelt

not me

Description of the Work

The title, **not me**, comes from the last line in the video in my father's section ("Must See TV") of the installation. The words, "not me," are a testament to my denial/refusal to admit that, as a child, I am in fact much like one of my parents. A parent whom I closely resemble in both appearance and (unfortunately) in temperament. The words, "not me," also make reference to a much deeper denial, that of the abused child who refuses to acknowledge the horrors of her childhood, and will continue in the face of proof and memory to protect the abusers and deny the truth.

The installation, available to the public from March 31, 1997 – April 14, 1997 in the School of Photographic Arts and Sciences (SPAS) Gallery at RIT, was presented as such:

Upon entering the double doors of the gallery, the viewer walks down a dimly lit corridor, which has a wall at the end (making a "T" shaped dead end) with the title

not me

Master of Fine Arts Thesis Exhibit
Michele Anne Petrulis

At this point, the viewer may choose to go around the wall to either the left or to the right (after first being asked to remove his/her shoes). The description that follows describes the viewer's path to be to the right side of the wall.

After turning the wall's corner, the viewer enters a space filled with amorphous shapes, diaphanous, ethereal. These shapes are "swirling" around a central figure, more substantial, but also beautiful and flowing. Upon further inspection (walking up to and among the figures), this space is inhabited by a "follow-the-leader" dance of figures in three-dimensional space. The floating figures are circling around the central figure, seeming to reach out to one another, and more figures appear to be entering the space from the left to join the dance.

The central figure is a wedding dress (previously owned by the artist's mother), with a red ribbon pinned to the dress above the left breast (much like a

State Fair prize ribbon) declaring "Mother of the Year." The dress does have stains on the front of the skirt, and is wrinkled. The dress appears to be standing up without a wearer, without strings. The figures surrounding the wedding dress are ladies' lingerie, full slips, all clean and unwrinkled. At the base of each slip is an embroidered sentence - -not immediately noticeable, as the thread matches the ivory or white of the slip. Each slips' embroidery is different, with each of the slips (including those in the next space) bearing one of "Emma's Rules" (see Section Two).

The embroidered phrases are:

If you can't say something nice, don't say anything at all
Ladies "don't sit like that."
Never cross a room holding a drink or a cigarette
Do not ride around in cars with two or more men
It is not nice to swear
Always look your best
Smile--it's a good defense
It is better to be interested than interesting
Be a friend to have a friend
Always give people a second or third chance
Cleanliness is next to Godliness
Forgive and forget

The slips appear to be standing up without wearers, without strings. The walls and floor are bare, and there is no sound.

As the viewer walks to the left (in the direction from which the slips appear to be entering), there is a faint sound -- that of muffled speaking, a woman's voice. Turning the corner, the viewer enters this space and the cold bare floor of the previous space is replaced by soft fur. This "fur" is long, shaggy, and white. It has many large golden eggs lying on it and tangled up in the long fur, and the eggs can be picked up and opened (if a viewer chooses to do so).

Inside each of the eggs is a single sentence handwritten in gold, folded much like a Chinese fortune cookie. The sentences read:

The past isn't dead...it isn't even past. W.F.
It is far more difficult to kill a phantom than reality. V.W.
I hate you.

The walls of this space are also covered. Over one thousand copies of a letter written to Michele Petrulis by her father, Ted, in July 1994, have been photocopied and then thumbtacked to the walls in neat rows. On each letter there is a different phrase highlighted in gold, and the letter slightly overlap each

other so that the viewer cannot see the wall beneath them. On the wall closest to the previous space, a slip is pinned to the wall, trying to "leave" this space to join the others of its kind in the dance.

This space is inhabited by furniture, arranged like a young girl's bedroom. There is a single bed, dresser, and desk. The surfaces of these three pieces of furniture are completely covered with gold handwriting; the same word repeated over 10,000 times: "die. die. die." The writing is neat and small, and in careful rows along the edges and curves of the furniture.

The bed, a single with white and gold trim, had a "blanket" made of row upon row of shiny 1996 pennies glued to it. The rows are neat and tight, and the pennies cover the "blanket" completely (except for a white crocheted border at the very top). The pennies alternate "heads" and "tails" with each vertical row, and there are over 5,900 pennies on the "blanket."

Under the bed (the viewer must get on his/her knees to lift the blanket and peek under the bed) there are twelve belts sewed to the bottom of the bed, looping and touching the carpet underneath. These belts belonged to Michele Petrucci's father, and can be seen in the darkness under the bed by fifty tiny white lights that are also sewed to the bottom of the bed.

The bed also has a pillow, covered by a white crocheted pillow sham, and written on the pillow underneath (but invisible to the viewer) are the words "pretend you're asleep."

The desk, set against another wall, has three drawers on the side, and one central drawer. The matching chair (white with gold trim) has a gold tapestry seat cushion. The viewer may choose to sit in the chair or stand. All four drawers can be opened, and each of them has identical contents. The drawers are lined with soft cotton batting at the bottom, with black velvet covering the entire drawer. The effect is similar to a jewelry box compartment. Instead of jewels, however, the drawers are filled to the top with "fortune tellers," a kind of origami game young girls play. Instead of white or origami paper, the fortune tellers are made from pages of books.

Two books were used to make the more than five hundred fortune tellers:

Adult Children of Alcoholics and
My Mother, Myself

The dresser, against the corner of the space, has a large mirror and six drawers. Only five of the drawers can be opened; one has been nailed tightly shut. The drawers of the dresser (including the nailed drawer) are lined with cotton batting and black velvet like the desk, but there are no fortune tellers in any of the drawers. The drawers' contents, top to bottom, left then right, are as follows:

| | |
|---------------|---|
| Top Left: | 73 stolen spoons |
| Middle left: | nailed shut |
| Bottom Left: | red/white/blue baseball mitt, and keys hanging above them (one key in red) |
| Top right: | 73 Polaroid photographs |
| Middle right: | 3 white / ivory slips |
| Bottom Right: | 1 lb. ball of red hair |

The mirror to the dresser has a hole not in the glass, but in the silver on the back, so that the viewers can see themselves reflected in the glass, but also see through the glass to what is behind the mirror. Behind the mirror is a video monitor, repeatedly playing the video "My Bell Jar is a Tundra" (1995). The images are black and white, (footage of the ice in an ice skating rink, shot at close range, while the artists skates around the rink) and the video is shown without audio (although in this corner of the space the muffled audio heard upon entering is becoming clearer).

This space is a dead end. To find the source of the audio, the viewer must go out the way he/she came in, and at the title wall

not me

Master of Fine Arts Thesis Exhibit
Michele Anne Petrulis

the viewer must this time go around the wall to the left. After turning the corner of the title wall, the viewer enters a small space with only two inhabitants. Closest to the viewer is the back of a child-sized silver chair with something on it, resembling a trophy. Facing the viewer, upon a small silver stool, is a video monitor. the video monitor is the source of the audio, a woman speaking. The video is repeated indefinitely, with the woman apparently speaking directly to the object in the chair.

The viewer enters this space, the walls and floor are bare, and the light of the video monitor illuminates the object in the chair. Walking around to the far side of the space, the viewer can see that the object is a golden urn, mounted on a marble pedestal, with the initials TRB engraved upon a brass plate on the marble pedestal. The urn is handcuffed to the chair, and if a viewer chooses to open the urn, inside it is filled with a dense finely milled off-white substance that is similar to flour.

The video monitor repeats endlessly the video "not me" (1997), a twelve-minute monologue delivered to one viewer, her father. The monologue is as follows:

"Why?"

"Why did no one ever try to stop you?"

"Why didn't you stop yourself?"

"Did you think that I was too young to remember?"

"Did you?"

"I would be in bed, that huge canopied bed, snuggled in tight with my stuffed animals like a little lonely princess. I would hear you, coming home so late at night, and I could just feel the air change. It would become murky, dark deep green, like that slimy pond behind the house – with millions of scary, awful things just below the surface (but ready to get you as soon as you dared slip your little toe in)."

"I could feel it, feel the air became heavy, the tension, the nearness of the inevitable explosion."

"And I was never disappointed."

"Then yelling would start. An argument. The same goddamn argument as always, every single time. Then, the hitting. Why did you have to hit her?"

"Then your voice would turn cold."

"Shirley, take your clothes off."

"Take your clothes off."

"No."

"No, Ted, just go to sleep."

"Then the yelling would start back up again, and then she would be screaming, she would be screaming, she would be screaming, and then she would cry."

"I heard this. All of this. I would be lying stock-still in bed-- my arms, hands, legs clenched so tight they would get sore -- my jaw so tight, and my stomach hurting."

"I knew that I couldn't make any noise, because if I made any noise, then I would be next."

"So I would lay in bed...so...still. So afraid to move. Being so careful not to rustle the sheets, not to make any noise... not even to breathe too hard."

"Why?"

"Why did you have to rape her?"

"Why did you do it?"

"Why couldn't you stop?"

"Why did you call me at 2:30 in the morning, and ask me if you've ever raped me?"

"Why?"

"I remember when you had weekend visitation. When I was ten, you lived with your mother. And we spent every Saturday night closing the Bar X Bar. We would come home around 3 a.m., and I would sleep in your bed while you slept on the couch."

"Why was that night any different?"

"Why did you ask me those questions?"

"I was only ten years old."

"Did I know how to French kiss? How the hell could I know what French kissing was? I was only ten years old! But the need to please you... I lied and said yes."

"Then you told me to prove it...that I French kiss you!"

"I panicked."

"There we were, sitting on the edge of your bed, near 4 a.m., I'm exhausted, confused, and scared... and you were so huge, so drunk, and so *my dad* --"

"We began to argue."

"We sounded like you and my mom."

"We woke up your mother, and she came into the room. 'Leave her alone, Ted.' That's all she said."

"You tried to argue with her, but you left the room that night."

"There I was. I lay awake for hours, watching the glow-in-the-dark numbers on the clock. I had to stay awake, in case you came back. I had to stay awake, so that I could lay perfectly still – and make absolutely no noise. If I made any noise, that would tell you that I was awake and waiting for you. So I couldn't make any noise – I couldn't go to sleep."

"Why?"

"Why am I *still* afraid of the bathtub?"

"I still can't explain this."

"In 1994, I went to see you in Arizona. I had vowed that this would be the last. You had had another stroke, and your cancer was worse."

"I knew you were dying."

"I needed to see you – to tell you some things...to make my peace with you."

"I knew that this would be the last time I ever saw you alive."

"The first few nights, it was so hot I couldn't sleep. I found myself lying awake, eyes wide open, listening."

"Listening."

"Listening."

"For what?"

"For you. I was 27 years old, and I'm still afraid of you."

(sigh) "Lying awake, trying not to move..."

"I was afraid that you were going to come into the room where your mother and I were sleeping. I was afraid that she wouldn't wake up, and that you were going to want to have sex with me."

"Why would I be afraid of this?"

"Why...when it had never happened before?"

"The next night, I was still so afraid that I brought my gun in from the car. I hadn't brought it in before because I know how you feel about guns."

"And I have my gun, and I'm waiting for you."

"Waiting for you."

"Waiting for you to come into that room so I could kill you."

"Waiting for you to come to me so I could kill you."

"Waiting for you to come to me so I could kill you...and here I was in Arizona...I had come to YOU."

"For what?"

"It seemed so abundantly clear."

"To kill you, of course."

"So I think about it. You had already had 3 or 4 big strokes; part of your brain is dead; you can't see sometimes; you can't stand up sometimes; your liver is "going;" your cancer is progressive; and still you suck up air on this planet, living off of programs supported by my taxes; you are only 50 years old..."

"I have to kill you."

"The only reason you're still alive is because God doesn't want you."

"God and the Devil are fighting over who has to spend eternity with you."

"Even my all-forgiving God won't forgive you, so... why should I?"

"This is how I did it."

"At around 9 - 10 a.m., Grandma gets up, has breakfast and goes down to the jacuzzi. I put on my swimsuit and tell her I'll be right after her. I give her 12 minutes to get to the jacuzzi, really get the water roaring, then I get my gun."

"I open the bedroom door, and walk over to the bed. I hold the gun to you right temple, (after all, you are right handed) and at this point I have to decide: do I let you beg for your life, or do I shoot you now? (Knowing you, you wouldn't beg for anything) If you're soundly asleep, I could grab your hand and hold it while I pull the trigger, which would get powder burns on your hand and save me the trouble of doing it later."

"So, I pull the trigger" (*sigh*)

"Then I cradle your head in my arms, to me, and rock you, messing up the crime scene – getting myself really messy.. kind of the way Jackie O. did after reaching over the back of the car for JFK's brains – I scream – loudly, then run and call 911. I come back to the bed, again scoop you up, destroying more evidence, and wait for the paramedics arrive. I'll be too upset to talk, in fact, I'll be hysterical, screaming a lot, yelling 'Why?'."

"My explanation:

"Yes, it's my gun, and it's registered to me in the state of Arizona. I am a woman, and I am traveling, so it makes sense for me to have a gun."

"Yes, my dad was very physically ill – and Gramma can vouch for that."

"No, I didn't realize that you were so despondent...but my father did keep things to himself – in fact, his own brother also shot himself in the head, and it was 2 years before he told me about that."

"But I plan to be very hysterical whenever when people question me too much (*smile*) , so they stop asking me questions."

"And I get off scott free!"

"I hate you."

"I hate you. I hate you. I hate you. I hate you. I hate you. I hate you."

"And even now I'm still afraid of you."

"And I hate it when our fucking family says that I am 'just like you.'" "Because I am not. I am not like you. I am not like you."

"Not me."

(*end of video*)

Part of the following story was presented on the gallery wall as an "Artist's Statement"

As this is a Master's Thesis Exhibit, the work does definitely have specific interpretations for the artist, but to confine the work to one interpretation would limit it considerably. All viewers bring to art their own experiences, knowledge, and baggage, so the interpretations should change as different viewers respond differently to the work.

That being said, here is the point of view of the artist:

Rather than being "one-note", or singular in intent, this work tells a story. The story begins many years ago, "Once upon a time," even before the artist was aware that her story had begun. The place, or setting of the story is her bedroom. For a child, the bedroom can be a refuge, a hideout, sanctuary or cell. Sometimes the monsters under the bed are real, and a bedroom can be as frightening as a locked tower that no handsome prince can reach. (One alternative is to jump from the window only to drown in the moat far below.)

But this is a story of survival. Briefly, it goes something like this:

Once upon a time there was a little princess. She was called "Princess" by her Father, who loved her very much. Her Mother did not call her Princess, but tried to keep her "in the real world" by teaching her the Rules. The little princess was a happy child, although she was often very lonely, as she had no siblings, or pets. She spent hours upon days in her beautiful bedroom, dreaming of far-off lands and playing imaginary games.

Her imaginary world became more and more real, as her life "in the real world" became deep, dark, and scary. The little princess had a Monster living in her castle, one that was impossible to chase away. She would hear him at night, growling loudly and breaking things, and sometimes her Mother would scream. But where was her Father, the one who called her Princess? Why couldn't he make this Monster go away? Sometimes the little princess' Mother would hide in her room, sleeping in her bed to protect herself from the Monster. But the magic of the princess' beautiful room could not keep the Monster away. Alone and frightened, they endured the terrorizing of the Monster that would not go away.

The little princess knew that someday she would grow up and protect her Mother, because her Mother couldn't protect herself. The little princess reached far into her dream world for help and inspiration. A tiny voice which spoke to her when she was afraid told her just what to do. She would pretend to be a good little princess, do her chores, study in school, and secretly become strong enough to finally destroy the Monster.

Meanwhile the Mother and the little princess left the castle, hoping to run from the Monster. But he followed them, and the terror continued. The little princess vowed to one day kill the Monster. . . "die. die. die. die. die."

The little princess learned magic to protect herself from the Monster. She could leave her body, she should become someone else, and she could cast spells

to make her future better than this. For a while, it seemed that the magic worked. But the Monster still lived. The Monster became old, riddled with disease, and yet he lived to terrify the little princess. She had survived, but she had not become strong enough to kill him. She knew what she had to do.

The little princess began in her room. She cast magic spells in every corner, focusing all of her energy onto the destruction of the Monster. die.

[illegible]

And she did.

The End

Alas, this is not the whole story. The little princess may or may not have lived happily ever after, we will never know. What we do know, however, is more of the details of the story, as seen in the art work.

The Mother, a fragile creature of little imagination, driven to bend her daughter to adhere to the Rules, appears in four places in *not me*.

First, we see her as the beautiful, untouchable figure who has won the (sarcastic?) honor of "Mother of the Year." She is alone in her elaborate splendor, oblivious to the smaller figures who are trying to emulate her, who are so imbued with her Rules that the Rules are a part of them, yet inside they are empty. The Mother wears her wedding dress, a symbol (for her) of her achievement in society, but her dress is both wrinkled and permanently stained. We know what kind of marriage she has had. Still, she seems proud and one might think that she is blind to her situation.

Second, the lingerie slips that are stored in the middle right hand drawer of the dresser, flow out into the next room, and circle around the Mother of the Year are representative of Mother's influence on her daughter. She has created beautiful offspring, but they are as empty as she is, their only concern is to be like Mother, and obey the Rules that she has dictated that they follow.

Third, the Mother is linked to her daughter's future in the origami fortune tellers flooding the desk in the bedroom. One half of the fortune tellers are created from the pages of My Mother, Myself. This can be interpreted as the daughter's realization that no matter how hard she may try, her Mother's influence is great in determining the kind of woman she will become.

Fourth, the Mother is mentioned in the "not me" video. The narrator (her daughter) tells of how Mother is yelled at, beaten, and raped by her husband. Still, Mother chooses to stay with her husband, and the cycle continues, and worsens.

The Monster (or Father) has left his mark in many more places in this work. Most obviously, the Monster is the man who could not be stopped, who would not stop himself in the "not me" video. His daughter accuses him, berates him, begs of him, and finally declares her independence from him. The monster is now dead, and his cremated remains are in an urn, chained to a chair, silently sentenced to listen to/watch his murderer condemn him for eternity.

The Monster lurks in the bedroom under the bed, as many childhood monsters do. Here he is represented by twelve of his belts, curled up and coiling like snakes ready to strike. The Father, in one of his many torments of his Princess, would remove his belt, hold it by the ends, and snap it to warn his daughter that a beating was close at hand. This intimidation tactic worked very well, scaring her so thoroughly that to this day that snap makes her jump.

The Monster lurks in the bottom left hand drawer in the dresser, where his baseball mitt and keys hide inside. The baseball mitt (a one-of-a-kind autographed Roberto Clemente red-white-and-blue baseball mitt) was owned by the Father, lent to the 6 year-old daughter to play with, and left outside. The

Monster wanted to punish the girl for her stupidity. In his rage, he forgot about the belt intimidation routine, and spun the girl around to beat her. He raised his bare hand to strike her, but she reached out and grabbed his key ring off of the dining room table. She held them behind her, and when the Monster struck her, one key plunged deep into his palm, wounding him.

The Monster lurks on the walls, where Father's words are a reminder of how he feels about his Princess. Over one thousand copies of Father's letter are tacked to the walls, and each time the daughter read them, she highlighted what she felt most strongly. Each time, the phrase, or word, was different. She carefully traced over the words in gold, making them beautiful.

The Monster also lurks in the fortune tellers inside the desk. His half of the fortune tellers are created from the pages of Adult Children of Alcoholics. This can be interpreted as the daughter's realization that no matter how hard she may try, her Father's influence is also great in determining the kind of woman she will become.

The Princess inhabits the spaces where things are made beautiful. She Uses gold paint to write her words, the eggs are golden, the carpet in her bedroom is fluffy white and soft, and the pennies on her bed are all shiny and new.

The little princess, however, has many dark things to hide. Some she hides in the open, others are hidden even from her. She inhabits the lingerie when she tries hard to be the child her Mother wants her to be. She painstakingly writes words and folds paper to keep herself sane. She steals spoons (and hides them in a drawer) to reclaim her womanhood, but her efforts are thwarted, and they are used to violate her.

The little princess is sad and lonely, and what she sees when she looks in the mirror reflects this. Her "bell jar" is a tundra, from which she can never escape, she feels. We can see the ice, with its changing light when we look in the mirror. Is that what she sees? The little princess also rips out her hair, strand by strand, until she has a ball the size of a football. Out of frustration? Desperation? Futility? Rage?

Will she ever learn? Her repetition of actions, taking days, weeks, months, years of her life. . . when will she realize that this "magic" does not work? Eventually she gains enough strength to achieve her goal: to slay the Monster. In the video "not me" she tells the story, of why she had to seek out and kill the Monster. Because he would not stop. Because no one would stop him. Because he could not stop himself.

How the work in **not me** relates to this "story"

The division of the gallery space into three separate spaces serves many purposes:

1. to symbolize the child caught in between two parents
2. to represent a child's Trinity: Mother, Father, Self
3. to focus the viewer's attention
4. to physically "protect" the central space with walls

This work tells a story. As a whole, the three spaces tell three different stories, yet are really three acts of the same play. The two connected spaces are more or less taking place simultaneously, while the isolated space is an epilogue or prologue (depending on which way the viewer goes first, left or right).

Within each space there is a complete story to be told. Each piece within the space reveals more of the story, allowing the viewer to choose how much information he/she will receive by his/her interaction with the pieces within each space. As the viewer progresses to the next space, the spaces build upon each other, allowing the story to grow (clearer or more confusing, again depending upon the viewer).

The child's room (center space) contains references to both outside spaces. The dresser contains the origins for the lingerie (they slip out of a drawer and into the next space where they become real and substantial, standing on their own), as well as providing clues to the impending death (die. die. die. die. on all furniture surfaces). Within the child's room, the furniture work as a set (they are a set) and the theme of obsessive writing is on the walls and furniture.

The opulence (as befits a "princess") of the gold and white furniture is repeated in the gold text on white furniture, gold text on white letters tacked to the walls, golden eggs on the white carpeting, and gold writing on black paper inside each of the eggs. This opulence is also seen in the silver chair and stand in the "not me" video space, and the once beautiful wedding dress in the lingerie space. Luxuriousness is also seen in the care taken in the padding and black velvet lining inside each drawer in both the desk and dresser (even the drawer that is nailed shut).

Uncomfortableness is an element visible in each space as well. In the "not me" video space, the urn is literally chained to its seat, forced to watch an uncomfortable video (the subject in the video appears uncomfortable, too). In the lingerie space, the figures are constructed from chicken wire, contorted and twisted uncomfortably, while a glance inside them sees sharp edges dangerously poking towards the center. In the child's room, uncomfortableness is the viewers' burden, as they must invade the privacy of the furniture to learn their contents, or peer under the bed, or read a letter that is clearly not fake nor addressed to them. The additional element that makes one watch one's step in

this room is the eggs on the carpet. While they are easy to spot, they are plentiful and care needs to be taken while moving around the space, lest a viewer step on an egg and crack it.

Thematically, these spaces and individual pieces are also interrelated. As stated previously, each space does tell its own story, but these stories do combine to tell a much larger tale. Within the lingerie space, the isolated Mother of the Year, who appears to be ignoring her charges revels in her beauty and grace. She does not see that she is soiled, stained, wrinkled and old, but exists as she sees herself in her mind. . . eternally beautiful.

Meanwhile, the slips have tried to escape their confinement in a child's room to rally around the Mother, to be just like her, eternally beautiful. They remember what she has taught them, the Rules they must abide by, and they are so ingrained with these Rules that the Rules are a part of them now. The slips chase after the Mother, in a graceful dance, hoping that she will notice them. She does not.

Within the "not me" video space, the isolation of the Father (dead now, his cremated remains in an urn), now chained to a chair, sits alone in his space, forced to listen to what his daughter has to say. He saw himself in his own mind as a great athlete, interesting company, and a good Father. He did not listen when she tried to talk to him when he was alive, so he will listen to her now (even though he cannot listen any longer).

Within the center space, the child attempts to bury her feelings, becoming depressed and disassociated (isolation video), and tries to make herself feel (ripped out hair). The silence of the eggs can be broken, but the traps of scary snakes under the bed and the fortune of becoming just like one's parents are real.

Deciphering the Symbolism and Personal Significance of Each
Individual Element in **not me**: A Checklist

In my Father's space:

silver chair In C. S. Lewis The Chronicles of Narnia, the fourth novel in the series, the missing Prince Rilian is enslaved by a witch -- who chains him to a silver chair each night when his enchantment wears off and his sanity returns. My father is handcuffed to a child's silver chair, and his fantasies of a loving, accepting, and obedient daughter are destroyed by the video he is condemned to forever see/hear.

urn and remains It is my father's wish to be cremated after death. I choose to honor that wish, as I do not desire to bury him.

handcuffs Chaining my father's remains to the child's chair symbolizes both his indestructible link to my childhood, and his sentence (for all eternity) for harms perpetuated against his only child.

not me (video) My condemnation, baring of my soul, the story of my "life with father" is a monologue of things that I have always wanted to say to my father, but have always been too afraid.

silver stool A child sized stool, but for me, reminiscent of a bar stool, which was where I was often perched when my father decided that he had the time to talk with me. (We were often in bars, even before my parents' divorce, as young as age five, perhaps even younger.)

In my Mother's space:

wedding dress This is my mother's wedding dress which she wore in 1964, and which was not cleaned or carefully stored. (It was discovered in my grandparents' basement.) It was presented to me, as a sacred object. Its present condition says a lot about how I feel about my parents' marriage, and reflects somewhat my relationship with my mother. The manner in which this object turns its back upon the smaller figures has significance, as does its headlessness.

"Mother of the Year" pin This accolade was bestowed by me upon my mother, with a great deal of sarcasm.

embroidered slips These figures embody my wanting to leave my childhood and become a woman (like my beautiful mother). They are also empty, pretty only on the outside, and each has a "Rule" physically embedded in it.

In the Child's Room:

"escaping" slip This slip flees from the dresser, along the wall, from childhood towards womanhood.

letters Over 1,000 copies of a letter my father wrote to me. Important phrases were highlighted upon each rereading. This is the only letter he has ever sent to me.

golden eggs The eggs are silence which I have walked upon, which could be broken at any moment by a careless step, slip of a word...

messages inside eggs Are meaningful to me.

white fur rug My mother's friend (whose family I envied) had a long hairy white shag carpet in their living room. I loved to touch it, even though every time I did my mother would yell at me to stay off of it.

dresser This is my childhood dresser. (27 years old)

velvet lined drawers Making each drawer precious, like the inside of a jewelry box, the drawers hold my secrets. And my horrors.

spoons I began stealing spoons in 1995. I have never been caught.

nailed drawer Inside this drawer is my greatest fear, and I cannot reveal it even to myself. That is why I nailed it shut.

red, white, and blue baseball mitt and keys The mitt is a facsimile of my father's autographed Roberto Clemente mitt which I lost when I was seven. The keys are symbolic of the beating I received, when I held the keys behind me -- sinking a key into my father's palm as he hit me -- causing my father to go to the hospital (leaving a permanent scar).

Polaroids This is documentation of each stolen spoon's life after bringing it home. Polaroids make things real to me.

folded slips This is where the slips originate.

ball of hair Every time I wish I was dead, I gently rip a hair out of my head. The obsessiveness of pain began here. Yes, this is my hair.

desk This is my childhood desk. (25 years old)

fortune tellers This is my future, limited to two outcomes.

bed This is not my childhood bed (mine was a double canopy). However, this model is similar in the French Provincial style to the Sears & Roebuck mass-produced girls' bedroom sets of the mid 1960's.

pennies There are over 5,900 pennies, declaring my obsession with "making a wish" and the wish is always the same (and is repeated on the surfaces of the bed, desk, and dresser) die. die. die. die. die. die. die.

pillow Invisible to the naked eye (without some serious searching) are the words "pretend you're asleep" handwritten on the pillow inside the pillow sham. But I know it's there.

belts The belts are alive, coiling, snapping creatures that hide where all monsters hide in every child's nightmare -- under the bed. These are my father's belts, the ones I am so afraid of that they became real.

physical layout The way the exhibit is presented, the viewer must pass through my mother to get to me, but my father is isolated from both of us. The child is trapped in between them, as I often was, but is completely cut off from the father.

*"Art is a hammer, not a mirror."
-John Grierson, documentary filmmaker*

The MFA Work

Fall 1993 (and Brad)

When I first came to RIT in August 1993, my intention was to further my instruction in photography, as well as to devote myself to the endeavor of making art. My previous work had led me in the direction of handmade artist's books, and I had wanted to experiment with platinum printing and text/image combinations. This desire and previous work in two galleries led me to an assistantship as well as a workshop with Mr. Brad Hindson. Shortly after the quarter began, however, our working relationship became strained as Mr. Hindson attempted to engage me in a relationship of an unprofessional nature. As a result, my artwork suffered, I relinquished my assistantship, and dropped our workshop. The work I did create that quarter was of two viewpoints: the need for control and balance, and a desire for revenge. Of the latter, I created a handmade book "L'il Black Book," which contained gelatin silver prints of men, with text. The text "rated" these men, named them, gave biographies of them. I invented new identities for familiar faces, and provided phone numbers for them. My father was one of the men listed in my "L'il Black Book."

Winter 1993-4

My father's health began to worsen, and my obsession with his death had renewed. I began fantasizing his death in a number of "freak accident" ways, hoping that since his poor health wasn't killing him, that perhaps an accident would find him vulnerable.

A story was related to me, about a man who had frozen his tongue to his car door lock. He was rescued by the fire department, but I envisioned a more darker fate. The image of my father as this man, blindly drunk, fumbling for car keys, finding his car door lock frozen was clear in my mind. I, however, pictured my father as having his tongue frozen to the lock, and thinking about his life as he would eventually freeze to death.

I traveled around town, photographing 250 different car door locks, most of which had some snow on them. I printed these in color, and on the other side, made postcards describing the tale of the poor man who dies from exposure. In addition, I began writing obituaries -- for everyone I knew. I also created a

series of photographic death announcements based on French "Cartes Des Mortes" (death cards). The photographs depicted innocuous scenes, but the text on the other side told a tale of unexpected horror. I began seeing death everywhere. Still, I waited for my father to die.

Spring 1994

At this point, I realize that wanting and waiting for someone to die is tiresome, and I am developing a reputation for being obsessed with death. I turn inward, to attempt to deal with my pain and bitterness, to real out and connect with others, to try to heal. The result is a piece called "God is Everywhere," the title coming from an inspirational little book my mother used to read to me at bedtime. My fractured image, presented as poorly sewn together, mounted on a mirror, had as a focal point a red-stained key dangling in front of the photograph.

The mirror has text ("God is Everywhere") repeated on it, and next to this piece is a baseball mitt with a letter crumpled up inside of it. On the letter (white paper, red writing) is the story of how, as a seven year old girl, I borrowed my father's red, white, and blue autographed Roberto Clemente baseball mitt. I left the mitt outside, and it was stolen. I was to be punished for this, but in my father's haste, he did not remove his belt. He went to hit me with his open palm, but I had grabbed his keys and held them behind me as he swung...plunging one key deeply into his palm. He had to go to the hospital, and still bears the scar.

The mitt and keys will reappear in **not me**.

At this time, I began investigating my means of survival -- of coping with a traumatic childhood, and recognized three distinct personalities. I began recording them visually, through Polaroids. I made records of myself in various situations, logged my reactions to situations, and created double-exposure Polaroids to document the existence of multiple personalities.

As a social experiment, I made it clear that I had "Disassociative Personality Disorder" which is very rare, and indeed, I do not suffer from it, but the response from my colleagues was interesting to say the least, and my validity as an artist was questioned. As such, I continued to play the multiple personality game, and extended the game to others, creating alternative lives for everyone I knew.

Summer 1994 (Dad and O. J.)

The summer I traveled with the Desert Southwest Workshop people was tense -- I was coming to terms with having "multiple personalities" and still struggling with death issues. I knew that after being in the desert for one month that I would be visiting my father in Arizona for the last time, and I had a lot I need to say to him to make my peace.

Visiting the cemeteries of the Mexican people was especially moving, as their gravesites appeared to celebrate death, and I made a book from the photographs taken there.

As I traveled, I met many people, and I asked many of them to pose for me. Many agreed, and I asked them to "choose a flower" from the flowers that I carried around in the desert as a prop. After returning to New York, I created life stories for these people, and condensed them into a book called "True Stories." Some of the people in the images were familiar to me, but that didn't affect my need to tell their stories as I saw them...and my need to create alternate realities grew.

During this quarter, I discovered the joys of moving pictures, and made two videos, "Daddy's Little Girl" and "We 3." DLG continued the theme of struggle with my father, with my narration being the reading aloud from my journal of the two weeks spent together in the summer of 1994. My anger is evident, and my frustration at his continuing life is present in the narration and accompanying images.

"We 3" is a presentation of my fractured selves, my "multiple personalities," Emma, Elisabeth, and Michele. Each of my personalities tells a story to the viewer, and their separateness is determined by which story they tell, their mannerisms, style of dress, affects of speech, and identity. Was I creating imaginary lives for myself? Not with these videos, but the time had come to reinvent myself.

Fall 1994

As Ken White's assistant, I worked as a grader in History and Aesthetics of Photography. One day, after class, Ken White had found a sheet of negatives, and had given them to me. "These are yours, aren't they?" he had asked me. Well, the woman in the negatives had the same length and bobbed style hair, she wore a flowered dress similar to the ones I frequently wore, and our body type did appear to be the same. Only one problem: that woman wasn't me. I now had a proof of an alternate reality, and I named her "The Girl From Someplace Else." I displayed the sheet of negatives, as found object, with accompanying text:

The Girl From Someplace Else

I walked into the room, and Ken handed me this sheet of negatives. "they're yours, aren't they?" he asked me. I looked closely at them. It certainly appeared to be me... the dress, the hair, even the posing resembled me! I laughed at the coincidence, but these negatives weren't mine. I left them on the table at the front of the room for the owner.

Two days later, they were still there.

*Who is this woman? She looks like me, smiles like me, wears her hair and dresses like me. I began to think: maybe she is me. Was I photographed without realizing it? Was I leading a life that I had no knowledge of? Was this yet another symptom of disassociative personality? Was this my Döppelgänger? Maybe Emma and Elisabeth were becoming too independent. Maybe one of them did this (posed for pictures and then left the negatives where I could find them), or maybe they actually exist in another reality or parallel dimension! Were our worlds colliding? Is this an attempt to tell me something? Is she the Michele from the other side of the looking glass?
These negative really bothered me. they still bother me.
They are an unanswerable question.*

In the same room, I also displayed a ball of hair, next to the negatives, also accompanied with text:

Every time

I wish I was dead,

I gently

rip

a hair

out of my head.

Collected September November, 1994

It was in this same room that the pennies first appeared. Overflowing a mason jar, onto the floor, the pennies were accompanied by text:

Wishing Well

*I try not to think negative thoughts. But it's hard, to be positive,
when all around you are negative thoughts.
See a penny, pick it up, all day long, have good luck...
I like to make wishes, they give me hope.
But lately my wishes have all been the same.*

My father is dying. He has had three strokes. He has cancer, cirrhosis of the liver, diabetes, high blood pressure, sometimes he's blind, sometimes he can't stand up, and he is a chronic alcoholic. I am tired of waiting for him to die. I am tired of being put through this. I want his suffering to end, for me to be set free. My wish is always the same:

*die. die. die. die. die. die. die. die. die. die. die.
die. die. die. die. die. die. die. die. die. die. die.
die. die. die. die. die. die. die. die. die. die. die.
die. die. die. die. die. die. die. die. die. die. die.
die. die. die. die. die. die. die. die. die. die. die.
die. die. die. die. die. die. die. die. die. die. die.*

At this point, I began seeing my work as not being shown to it's full potential on the walls, but rather I began looking into installations. I was influenced greatly by the work of Ann Hamilton, especially the way in which the spaces her work inhabits is completely transformed by multiples of candle flame marks on the walls, or tiny copper tokens on the floor. In this way I was reminded of Andy Warhol, whose use of multiples was reminiscent of movies -- how the multiple images seemed to flicker in the corner of a viewer's eye. I knew which direction I was headed in, and it was going to take a lot of work.

Winter 1994-5

My preoccupation with multiple personalities and childhood trauma had taken its toll, and it was time to seek professional help. I began therapy, was prescribed Prozac, and got to know depression from an objective standpoint, instead of being inside the calm eye of the cyclone. Experimenting in video, I made "My Bell Jar is a Tundra." It was not made with the intention to put it in

an installation, in fact, only two classes of students at RIT even saw the finished product. The images were simple ones – ice, shot very close up, while I skated around a rink. (My saving grace before Prozac was ice skating 15 hours a week.) I filmed in color, but translated the images into black and white "tundra-like" ice.

The voice-over was a softly spoken monologue:

"I don't consider myself as being depressed. Depression, to me, implies sadness. I'm not sad. Inside me is a tundra ... empty ... infinite. No matter what I do, I will always be like this. I try to imagine what it must be like for other people. But I can't."

"What is pain? I take a pin, and poke it into my flesh. Nothing. I pull it out – a drop of blood appears. It's so beautiful, but it doesn't make me happy. I wipe it away. I repeat this, hoping maybe once I'll feel something, but that something *never happens*."

"I wonder how much longer I can go on like this. Will it never end? I've got to do something – provoke some kind of response. Hopelessness overwhelms me, and I want to die. But I don't die. I write in my journal. Rip out my hair. Poke. Blood. Poke. Blood. Poke. Let me out of here."

The audio was edited out when the video was played in the **not me** installation. I chose this because I felt that the monologue would:

1. compete with the audio from the "not me" video, and I wanted the viewer to always hear (even if unclearly) "not me"
2. possibly lead viewers to conclude that the "die. die. die" on the furniture was in reference to suicide. It could be interpreted that way, but I did not want the video to lead a viewer to this conclusion.

Therefore, the "Bell Jar" video was shown video only, presented behind the mirror, seen through the glass, along with the viewer's reflection.

Spring 1995

Looking back to my work in the fall, I chose my strongest piece, the pennies, and reworked the piece into an installation – a "wishing well" big enough to walk into. I created wallpaper with "die. die. die." handwritten 10,000 times on it. I hung the wallpaper, and brought in 10,000 pennies, and a jar. To simulate the "bottom of a well" environment, I kept the room dark, closed off

the doorway with a black cloth, and handed each viewer a flashlight as they went in. The pennies were everywhere, covering the floor, and as a viewer entered the space, you could hear and feel the pennies moving underfoot. The implication of a repeated wish and the time spent wishing (evidenced by both the pennies and (even more so) the words "die. die. die.") worked for me as an installation. However, I felt that this piece was perhaps too negative, too focused, too obsessive. In time, I came to realize that these factors were strengths, and that I needed to embrace them, to utilize them, to carry them out even further.

This, however, was just a "trial run," as I was still finding my footing in installations (as opposed to traditional gallery presentation). But now I was on my way.

Fall 1995 - Spring 1996

I began piecing together my bedroom set from my home in Pennsylvania. I made many trips, bringing pieces back to New York, and reassembling my bedroom in my home, where I was no longer that little girl.

During this period, I also completed a Master's degree program in Art Education, so my artwork slowed somewhat. I began writing on the furniture's surfaces, and creating/collecting the objects for the drawers. Many objects were based upon previous work: the ball of hair (now much larger), the red-white-and-blue autographed Roberto Clemente baseball mitt, and the keys (one stained red).

Work on the presentation of the pieces as an installation continued, and the decision to show "Bell Jar" through the dresser mirror was conceived. As this is how I saw myself, I chose to present the video through the mirror, (the viewer sees what I see) but the viewer can still see his/her own reflection at the same time (themselves projected onto me).

Fall 1996 - Spring 1997

The work that would become **not me** was now halfway done, and the ideas were solid. The "die. die. die." took months to write, and the pennies which had been in a jar, then on the floor, were now in the process of being glued to a sheet for my bed. The pennies and "die"s were time consuming and tedious, which is when the mind tends to wander most. I thought of Ann Hamilton, her installations, and began to think more about my space. With

what was I going to cover the floor? How about the walls? How could I make it all interact with the viewer? Ms. Hamilton herself (or an assistant) is usually present in her installations, but how did I feel about sitting at my desk writing all day? Or perhaps sleeping in my bed, under the penny sheet? Maybe, but it wasn't what I had in mind. I wanted to show the past -- my past -- and the passage of time in creating the work, with my spirit in the room, but without me physically present.

The center room was all but complete, when I met with my committee.

"Still too safe."

"Not crazy enough."

"Missing something."

"Keep going."

So I took a deep breath, and dared to do that which I thought I could not do. I killed my father, and lashed out at my mother. I invited them into my work, and then vilified them. My father, his "remains" now in an urn, is condemned to listen to me tell him all of the things I could never say to his face while he was alive. I bare my soul, my pain, my anguish, and my rage. This video, "not me," runs in a loop, so that my father, chained to a chair, hears my version of the story for all eternity. His lies are silenced, he can not stop me from talking. He is powerless, and I am in control.

My mother, ever beautiful, is resplendent (she thinks) in her wedding gown, and her back is turned away from me, as it so often was. But the viewer sees her as she truly is: old, wrinkled, and stained. Oblivious, as always, to the small figure following her, the figures (ranging from small close to my room to nearly her height next to her), the figures are all inscribed with a "Rule."

The Rules, handed down from my mother, her sister, their mother, all with the best of intentions, were ridiculous, simplistic, and archaic. Yet these Rules upheld a certain standard of behavior that I was supposed to follow without ever being told. To break a Rule was commensurate with committing a sin -- it was difficult to be forgiven without proper penance. The biggest problem was that to learn a Rule, you had to break one first.

Now I had expanded my oeuvre to include my family, and we all looked crazy. How did I feel about making such autobiographical work? I have been a pinball, without power, without control. I have been at the mercy of my parents and society for too long. I do not doubt that my parents love me, but that does not change what happened or invalidate how I feel. I do not entirely blame them for my neuroses, but I do give credit where credit is due. At different times in my life and art work I have tried to be strong, but I have never been this direct before. I do not see this work as exposing myself, but rather as defining myself, and challenging others to make connections, find comfort, and take pride in their individual madness. I am not "sick."

I am not a liar. I am doing what needed to be done a long time ago, and proud of my work.

*"It's not art issues that will stop people in their tracks
on their way to lunch -- it's LIFE issues."*

-Jenny Holzer

Influences

Artistic influences

The artists mentioned previously, Ann Hamilton and Andy Warhol, have affected me deeply on a very personal level. Ann Hamilton's work is inspiring, breathtaking, and so scary that it reassures me when I become frightened by my own ideas. Andy Warhol's very life makes me want to cry. I understand him, and (being from Pittsburgh) identify with him. His work also inspires me, not to take chances with heavy material as Hamilton's does, but to see the fun in creating art, and to use art to make yourself complete.

Both artists deal with multiples, and while Warhol's suggest movies and Hamilton's the passage of time/repetition of an act, they both serve as role model for me because I never feel cheated by them. I have never felt left out of the audience who should understand their work, and I can relate to their work, even in books and slides. Their work reaches out and grabs *me* by the throat – and that's the kind of art that I want to make.

Ann Hamilton's *Parallel Lines* and *Accountings* have never been experienced by me in person – indeed I only know her work through books, slides, and videos. However, this has not lessened the impact on me, nor does it diminish her affect on my work. If, one might argue, Ann Hamilton's work has touched me so profoundly deeply -- and I've never seen it in its original form -- how would I be affected by it if I were to experience it first-hand? I cannot answer that question. But what documentation I have seen of her work has irrevocably altered my perceptions of what art can be.

Andy Warhol's work (the Warhol/Haring traveling exhibit) was the first art work that reduced me to tears. I stood in the Phoenix Art Museum, and cried for the loss of both artists. I understood that art could be fun, joyous, and still carry undertones of "serious" themes: death, violence, AIDS. The Art that I had been studying was heavy with Interpretation and Significance, and the work by Warhol and Haring seemed to get right at the heart of the matter – why make art if it isn't interesting or fun? Making art is a serious endeavor – the artist is inextricably tied to her art, and the creation of art is akin to having children...the work even takes on a life of its own when it leaves the studio to be shown and shared with others. Thus, as I stood there, touching Andy Warhol, allowing him to touch me, I understood.

The kind of art that make the hair on my arms raise, my eyes water with true understanding and connectedness – this is the kind of art that has influenced me. Along with visual artists, the songwriter/poets who have been my guides include Tori Amos, P. J. Harvey, and Eddie Vedder. These people, with their songs, create a popular art form (Pop art?) in which they tell stories of personal (and fictitious) horrors where the victims can find their voices. Their pain is universal – and their connection with me is genuine.

Lyrical words, spoken or sung, ring true in the voices of those who dare to utter them aloud. I am touched by their intensity, their unflinching stare into dark recesses of the soul, and their ability to convey these thoughts, responses, and desires without being contrived or clichéd.

It is much in this manner that I also hold in high esteem the writer John Irving. His words do not merely lie on the page, flat and quiet when the book is closed. Irving's words subliminate themselves, becoming attached to my subconscious, like a pack of memories planted there once, but now grown as wild as weeds. To affect one person with my work the ways that these visual, musical, and literary artists have done for me is my true goal.

Personal influences

During my years at RIT, I have been encouraged and discouraged by many people. The people who discouraged me were always asked to be specific, and indeed it is one of them upon whom I can heap praise as a personal influence: Jeff Weiss. I don't believe that Mr. Weiss ever liked my work, or that he could understand why I was making it, but then I don't truly understand his artwork, either. His criticisms of my progressing work were from his heart, and direct when given to me. I am thankful for that.

But it is without the support of others that I could not have been able to create the work that I did, and it is to those people to whom I am truly indebted. Judy McClenning, a fellow graduate student seemed to be the only other person I knew making art of this kind (emotional vs. intellectual art), and her fearlessness and guidance during my fledgling year kept the light burning at the end of the tunnel for me.

Many students, graduate and undergraduate were great sounding boards, but those to whom I am most sincerely appreciative are two faculty members. Cat Ashworth, who introduced me to video, and whose support has never been questioned, and Patti Ambrogio, who understood where I was going before I did. Without these two women I would not have been so brave, and with their support I have been able to reach farther than I ever believed possible in confronting ghosts and creating meaningful art.

*"There is no logical answer, yet its consideration leads to
a shift in perspective and awareness."*

-Lao Tzu

Conclusion

This exhibit does indeed represent a "closure" of my work as a graduate student in the School of Photographic Arts and Sciences at RIT. I entered the program in August, 1993, with the intention to devote time to my artistic development, to better my skills as a imaging artist, and to produce a comprehensive, relevant, and meaningful body of work. I do feel that this exhibit, **not me**, fulfills my expectations, and therefore grants me a degree of "closure" to my experience as a graduate student.

My intention was to continue working with images and text, and to create new art forms that joined the two. I am both surprised and pleased by the result of my labors, and continue to work with images and text.

I have always made art that came from within; from my heart, my soul, from deep places which I did not know existed. What I found while doing this work was frightening and ugly, and presented some very real problems for me during the creative process.

As an artist, living with this struggle, of pain and bitterness, engaging myself in thinking about this negative process of murdering a parent and blaming the other parent for neglect has been a traumatic experience. I am glad to be done with it. I have grown as an artist and a person, and while the creation of this Thesis has been somewhat troublesome, it has been cleansing, and I can now shut the door on my past.

Now that this exhibit has granted me "closure," I am free to pursue new ideas and explore new directions. I must admit, I have enjoyed obsessively writing the same word over and over again, and I have found great pleasure in mundane and repetitive actions. I can now make fortune tellers faster than any fifth-grade girl, and I know how long it takes to line up a penny and glue it down (about 60 seconds, if you're on a roll). I hope I never have to repetitively write the word "die." again (I have written it approximately 500,000 times during my 3 1/2 years at RIT), although compared to other words it is a comfortable word to write, and I could have chosen worse.

As far as the topic of this work is concerned, some of the personal issues raised during the creation of this work have already been resolved, and some of the issues that were raised simply don't matter to me anymore.

From where I stand now, the road ahead is clear and long, and I am never looking back.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Arbetter, Sandra. "Someone Else Lives Inside Me." *Current Health* Nov. 1992, pp.17 -19.
- Berger, John. Ways of Seeing. London:Penguin Press, 1972.
- Bruce, Chris. Ann Hamilton: Sao Paulo, Seattle:A Document of Two Installations .
Seattle:Henry Art Gallery, University of Washington, 1992.
- Cixous, Hélène. "Without End no State of Drawingness no, rather: The Executioner's Taking Off."
New Literary History. 1993 , 24: 91-103
- Faludi, Susan. Backlash:The Undeclared War Against American Women. NewYork:
Anchor Books, 1991.
- Finley, Karen. Enough is Enough:Weekly Meditations for Living Dysfunctionally. New York:
Poseidon Press, 1993.
- Friday, Nancy. My Mother/Myself:The Daughter's Search for Identity. New York:
Delacorte Press, 1977.
- Hackett, Pat (ed). The Andy Warhol Diaries. New York:Warner Books, 1989.
- Hacking, Ian. "Two Souls in One Body." *Critical Inquiry* 17 (summer 1991) pp. 838 - 867.
- Hancock, Emily. The Girl Within. New York:E.P.Dutton, 1989
- Irigaray, Luce. Speculum of the Other Woman.Trans. Gillian C. Gill. New York:Cornell
Universitty Press, 1985.
- Irigaray, Luce. This Sex Which is Not One. New York: Cornell University Press, 1985.
- Paglia, Camille. Sexual Personae. NewYork:RandomHouse, 1991.
- Pipher, Mary Bray. Reviving Ophelia: Saving the Selves of Adolescent Girls.
New York:Putnam, 1994.
- Putnam, Frank. "Altered States:Peeling Away the Layers of Multiple Personality."
The Sciences, Nov. Dec. 1992 pp.30 -37
- Warhol, Andy. The Philosophy of Andy Warhol (From A to B & Back Again).
New York:Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1975.
- Wolf, Naomi. The Beauty Myth. New York:Doubleday, 1991.
- Wolf, Naomi. Fire with Fire. Random House:New York, 1993.
- Wotitz, Janet. Adult Children of Alcoholics:A Survivor's Manual. Pompano Beach, FL:
Health Communication, 1983
- Tzu, Lao. Tao Teh Ching. Trans. Dr. John H. Wu, and Dr. Paul. K.T. Sih, editor.
Doubleday:New York, 1954.

not me

Slide List

Slides were shot on Saturday, March 29, 1997

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. entrance to exhibit (wall) | 11. center space |
| 2. space to left of wall | 12. "escaping" slip |
| 3. urn handcuffed to chair | 13. letters on wall (detail) |
| 4. remains inside urn | 14. dresser |
| 5. video "not me" | 15. video (My Bell Jar is a Tundra) |
| 6. space to right of wall | 16. top left drawer (detail) |
| 7. wedding dress | 17. top right drawer (detail) |
| 8. slips (six total) | 18. middle right drawer (detail) |
| 9. embroidery on slip (detail) | 19. desk |
| 10. entering center space | 20. bed |

COLOR SLIDE DUPLICATE

CO



Kodak PREMIUM
PROCESSING

Kodak PREMIUM
PROCESSING

COLOR SLIDE DUPLICATE

OL



Kodak PREMIUM
PROCESSING

Kodak PREMIUM
PROCESSING

COLOR SLIDE DUPLICATE

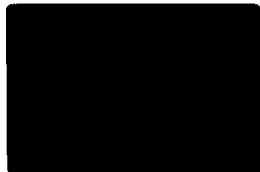
LO



Kodak PREMIUM
PROCESSING

Kodak PREMIUM
PROCESSING

COLOR SLIDE DUPLICATE

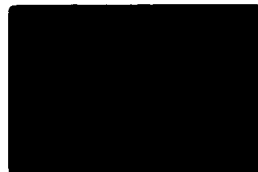


Kodak PREMIUM
PROCESSING

Kodak PREMIUM
PROCESSING

COLOR SLIDE DUPLICATE

OL



Kodak PREMIUM
PROCESSING

Kodak PREMIUM
PROCESSING

COLOR SLIDE DUPLICATE



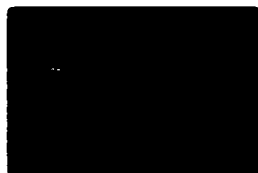
Kodak PREMIUM
PROCESSING

COLOR SLIDE DUPLICATE



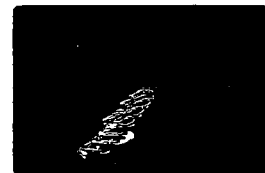
Kodak PREMIUM
PROCESSING

COLOR SLIDE DUPLICATE



Kodak PREMIUM
PROCESSING

COLOR SLIDE DUPLICATE



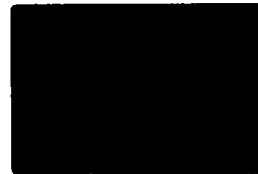
Kodak PREMIUM
PROCESSING

COLOR SLIDE DUPLICATE



Kodak PREMIUM
PROCESSING

COLOR SLIDE DUPLICATE



Kodak PREMIUM
PROCESSING

COLOR SLIDE DUPLICATE



Kodak PREMIUM
PROCESSING

COLOR SLIDE DUPLICATE



Kodak PREMIUM
PROCESSING

COLOR SLIDE DUPLICATE



Kodak PREMIUM
PROCESSING

COLOR SLIDE DUPLICATE



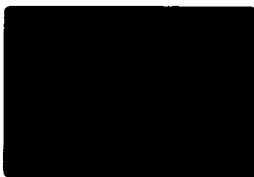
Kodak PREMIUM
PROCESSING

COLOR SLIDE DUPLICATE



Kodak PREMIUM
PROCESSING

COLOR SLIDE DUPLICATE



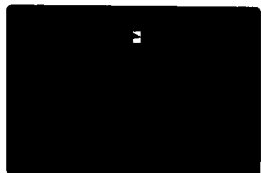
Kodak PREMIUM

COLOR SLIDE DUPLICATE



Kodak PREMIUM

Ektachrome
FILM



Kodak PREMIUM
PROCESSING

COLOR SLIDE DUPLICATE



Kodak PREMIUM